

REMARKS

In response to the final Office Action mailed August 13, 2004, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. To further prosecution of the present application, Applicants have amended herein claim 1. Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for the allowance of claim 4, and, as previously acknowledged, the allowance of claims 1-24.

Rejection of Claims 1-3 and 5-9 Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-3 and 5-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the Examiner indicates that he is unable to determine with certainty how the last subparagraph of claim 1 limits the invention. Applicants have amended herein claim 1 to clarify the limitation of the invention recited. Applicants note that the Examiner identified in the Office Action a number of possible interpretations of the language of claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that the interpretation of such language identified as: "I. ... **(both the entry and exit times) OR (a duration)**" is the correct interpretation. Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite the computer system is adapted to: report over the computer network one of: (i) an entry time of the critical state and an exit time of the critical state, and (ii) a duration of time as a difference between the entry time and the exit time of the critical state.

Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 particularly points out and distinctly claims the invention and, therefore, request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 2-3 and 5-9 depend from claim 1, and withdrawal of the rejection of such claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 should accordingly be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 1-3 and 5-9 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1-3 and 5-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. 5,955,946 to Beheshti. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-3 and 5-9 are patentable in view of Beheshti.

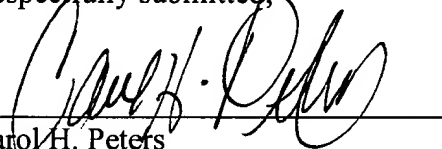
Beheshti does not teach, disclose or suggest at least the recited reporting features of claim 1. Claim 1 recites a notification system including a computer system adapted to report over a computer network one of: (i) an entry time of the critical state and an exit time of the critical state, and (ii) a duration of time as a difference between the entry time and the exit time

of the critical state. Thus, claim 1 is directed to a computer system adapted to report either entry and exit times of the critical state, or a duration of time that is a difference between entry and exit times. In contrast, Beheshti discloses providing a binary indication that an alarm/facility contact closure has or has not been in a certain state for a validation time. Beheshti does not teach, disclose or suggest the recited reporting of both entry and exit times of a critical state, or a duration of time as a difference between entry and exit times. Thus, claim 1, and claims 2-3 and 5-9 that depend from claim 1, are patentable in view of Beheshti.

In addition, Claims 2, 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beheshti. Claims 2, 6 and 7 depend from claim 1 and are patentable for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1. Thus, claims 2, 6 and 7 are patentable in view of Beheshti.

Based on the foregoing amendments and discussion, the present application is in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this response, he is invited to telephone either of the undersigned attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,



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